

Message Text

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46

ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-07 ISO-00 A-01 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 /026 W

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R 241115Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3976

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 5488

FOR NEA/PAB AND H AND A

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP

SUBJ: CODEL SIKES VISIT TO AFGHANISTAN

1. CONGRESSMAN SIKES AND PARTY ARRIVED IN KABUL ON AFTERNOON AUGUST 21 AND DEPARTED MORNING AUGUST 22. CODEL APPEARED SATISFIED WITH PROGRAM AND COUNTRY TEAM BRIEFING.

2. CONGRESSMAN SIKES WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE RUSSIAN POTENTIAL FOR USING AFGHANISTAN TO MAKE TROUBLE IN THE AREA. WE TOLD HIM THE USSR HAD A CONSIDERABLE PRESENCE, BUT THAT FOR THE TIME BEING, THE DAOUD REGIME WAS PURSUING AN INDEPENDENT POLICY, NOT SUBJECT TO RUSSIAN DICTATES. WE POINTED OUT OUR OBJECTIVE OF PLAYING A MODEST ROLE IN ENCOURAGING SUCH INDEPENDENCE.

3. ON THE AFGHAN/PAKISTAN ISSUE, CONGRESSMAN SIKES WONDERED IF THE AFGHANS HAD THE POTENTIAL TO TAKE TERRITORY IN THE NORTHWEST FRONTIER PROVINCE (NWFP) OF PAKISTAN BY FORCE. WE SAID WE DID NOT THINK THE AFGHAN ARMED FORCES COULD STAND UP TO THE PAKS. HOWEVER, WE POINTED OUT THAT THE EMOTIONAL AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND OF THE PUSHTO ISSUE MADE IT A POTENTIALLY SERIOUS PROBLEM AND WE BRIEFED THE CONGRESSMAN ON OUR EFFORTS HERE TO ENCOURAGE THE AFGHANS TO CONCENTRATE ON INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT AND TO STAY AWAY FROM IRRESPONSIBLE FOREIGN ADVENTURES OR BORDER MISCHIEF.

4. WITH REGARD TO US PROGRAMS, THE CONGRESSMAN SEEMED
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INTERESTED IN AND SYMPATHETIC TO USAID (ESPECIALLY EFFORTS HERE

TO CONFORM TO NEW CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTIONS IN FOREIGN ASSISTANCE),
DEA, PEACE CORPS, AND USIS PROGRAMS.

5. CONGRESSMAN SIKES BRIEFED COUNTRY TEAM ON HIS TRIP. HE
SEEMED PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED WITH HIS VISIT TO KOREA. THE
CONGRESSMAN EXPRESSED HIS DISMAY THAT THE HOUSE HAD NOT LIFTED
THE ARMS EMBARGO TO TURKEY AND SAID HE WAS SURE IT WOULD BE
DONE (IE, THE EMBARGO WOULD BE LIFTED) IN SEPTEMBER.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CODELS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975KABUL05488
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750293-0145
From: KABUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750822/aaaaatgq.tel
Line Count: 70
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <28 NOV 2003 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL SIKES VISIT TO AFGHANISTAN
TAGS: OVIP, (SIKES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006